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Introduction

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In contemporary Okinawa, there are four distinct types of village settlement. The first and the most common is the village cluster. Houses are grouped in a central area, usually along or on both sides of a road, surrounded by farm lands and rice fields. The second, the shoe-string type, is less common. Here houses are lined along either side of a main street. The third is a here-and-there type of settlement. This has been called a yadori (Japanese) or yadui (Okinawan) village; translated as plantation, but this is too exalted a word.[1] These villages may have sub-settlements. Houses are scattered among intervening plots of cultivated land. In the fourth category are the modern improvisations: land formerly in forest, grass or shrub which has been reclaimed and used for houses and nearby cultivation, or former agricultural land now taken up for house sites, a result of increased population or of war time destruction of other parts of a village. [311]

The basic type of Okinawan village is the cluster, a village small in area whose houses, close together, and on irregular winding lanes, are separated from one another by stone or rock walls, or by boundaries of trees or shrubs. The front part of the house compound usually is cut off from the road by a stone fence, running part way across, with the opening to the road obstructed by a stationary barrier, sometimes of stones, often of woven grasses. [351] [363]

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In the village of a bygone age, there were large open spaces like a common on the outskirts "often appearing as glades in the forest." In this area, rice was laid out to dry, horse racing and other sports took place, the village council met, goods were bartered, justice administered, and festivals celebrated.[2] When approached from a distance, the older villages seemed literally buried in foliage. In the last century the larger villages still had rest huts (cung-qua) for travellers, usually government officials to use from one overnight stop to another. The older village also had a series of small buildings on stilts three to six feet long. These were granaries and food storehouses. Some houses were also on stilts. Older accounts have stressed the concealment of the Okinawan village, its houses separated from one another, its lanes lined or embowered with bamboo, with banana trees, or with arbors. To [526] [35] [485] [343] [342]

[TEXT continues TOP of P. 48--Analyst]

1 Higa, Shunchō. Structure of the Ryukyuan rural community. The Japanese journal of ethnology, 15 (1950), 63-66. In Japanese with English summary, 151.

2 The Luchu islands and their inhabitants, as cited, 457. See also Basil Hall, Account of a voyage of discovery to the west coast of Corea and the Great Loo-Choo island, 123, 124.

197 pronunciation. The people in Matsuda could distinguish and identify villagers from other places, even though the villages were close to one another.[12] Okinawan is the language of social and everyday life. In Matsuda, it seemed to be supplanted by Japanese more than in the 191 other two villages. Japanese is used in official contacts and in dealing with foreigners. Pre-school children know very little Japanese. Their parents do not teach them the language, and they grow up speaking the village dialect. The only exception is that parents teach the child a few Japanese words of greeting, formalities, and expressions of thanks.

524 Children lack the toys and playthings they had prior to the war. At present they are a miscellaneous collection of rocks, pieces of wood, tin cans, twigs, branches, and anything which circumstance or childish improvisation can provide. In play, there is a great deal of running and catching, hide and seek, and games like hop scotch. [526] After beginning school, play has a more formal character, with dances, games, and organized athletics.

857 Sleeping habits, especially those of children, are in part the 513 result of circumstance, in part of custom, and it is difficult to separate the two. Children, often up to the age of 14 or 15, sleep with an older member of the family. In one Hanashiro family, the last born sleeps with the mother and the father until the next child comes. The older children sleep in another room with the grandmother or grandfather. If there are no elder relatives, the whole family may sleep together. This practice frequently is forced by economy and necessity. The war destroyed homes and the rebuilt ones are small. Blankets are expensive. In the better homes before the war, if there were plenty of blankets, rooms, and mosquito nets, children 8 years and over had their own sleeping rooms, or at least their own heavy blanket or cot. The farmer or fisherman does not use a bed or a cot. Now and then they are used by younger adults with a taste for western beds. But even before the war, 15 and 16 year olds often slept with parents or grandparents.

Children from different houses also sleep together after they have begun school. Children come to a house to play, and, when bed time comes, they go to sleep in the house of their playmates. These sleeping groups are common when classmates meet during the evening for study. The village is so small that there is no alarm at a child's absence. An old grandmother living by herself may have many children sleeping with her overnight, sprawled out in various positions on a comforter, protected by the very large mosquito net (kaya) so universal in Okinawa.

12 No attempt was made to study language, linguistics, or dialectical differences. To be profitable, these subjects must be studied by technically trained linguists.

872 calculating on the abacus, and a variety of other subjects. (These topics will be discussed in the chapter on education.

292 The pre-war school childrens' uniform is no longer obligatory.
291 Children wear what they have and what their parents can afford. The
302 girl frequently wears the familiar blue serge smock but more often her clothing is varied. Her hair has bangs in front and is cut straight, about on the level with the ear lobe. Neither do the boys wear prescribed clothing. With them too, it is a matter of what they have. A boy's hair is closely clipped to his head and will remain cut this way until he leaves junior high school, although this style also is no longer compulsory. He may have a school boy's cap, but this is not officially designated. It may be tan, white, blue, or olive drab, resembling either a military or a baseball type cap. Above the brim there is a metal tag with an abbreviation of the school name written in a Chinese character.

857 Three important new experiences come to him as a result of his
883 school life. The first of these is participation in school maintenance and upkeep. One of the commonest sights in any Okinawan primary, junior high, or high school is to see children working around the buildings and grounds under the supervision of their teachers. After typhoons, which destroy many of the rude, temporary, and rebuilt buildings, they straighten out the debris, and help in putting on a new thatched roof. The tasks done by school children and their teachers are those customarily performed by janitors and custodians in our school system. In junior or senior high school, if the child lives far away from the school, he may board there as well.

526 His second experience is with organized athletics. Much of this instruction is pointed to the annual athletic meets (undōkai) which have a remarkable hold in Okinawa on students, teachers, parents, and the rest of the villagers alike. This organized athletic training is a [177] Japanese introduction, but earlier accounts of a period when Japanese cultural influence was more nominal point to a love of games, races, and ball among the people.

572 The third of these new experiences is the formation of attachments with children in his own class. These friendships exist throughout life. The words, dōnen or dōsei, meaning the same year or the same age, are used by mature men and women to describe these early friendships. Close friendships almost invariably have had their origins in early close association in the same grade at school.

15 As is true of school boys the world over, truancy is not unheard of. Every once in a while, especially in junior high school, three or four boys report to the principal or his assistant because of absence from this work--but not from classes.

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Celebrations Through the Festival of the Fifth Month

796 The 15th day of the second lunar month (March 22, 1951) is the Buddhist holiday, higan, celebrating the spring equinox. Here it is a home festival of thanksgiving. Barley (ōmugi) or barley cakes [267] with brown sugar are offered with prayers for continued good fortune. Other grains, such as rice, millet (awa) may be offered, though the cakes (mugimochi) are of barley. In Hatsuda, this is not a home ceremony. An offering of white rice cakes is made by the village [793] head man, with the assistance of lower orders of the former priestess system, at the site of the village patron deity.

527 The third day of the third month is the festival of the dolls, [524] (hinamatsuri). It is not important in Okinawa and is spottily ob- [562] served. In Hinatogawa, it is a woman's holiday. Women and children make dolls. Gifts of dainties and candies in red lacquer boxes are prepared. People from nearby villages come to Hinatogawa, bring their lunches, and gather shells and catch fish.

The fifth day of the fifth month is Boy's Day. This Japanese holiday is not significant in the villages. There may be banners with a picture of a carp (koi no bori) displayed, visits to the place of the patron deity, some visiting and sanisen playing, and perhaps a play.

527 The 14th day of the 5th month (June 18, 1951) is the festival 526 of the Gods of the Sea and is observed only in Hinatogawa. It is this village's greatest celebration. The boat race, held on this day, attracts many from the interior villages. In Hanashiro, most activity ceases while everyone goes to the boat races. Before the [798] races, the villagers go to the religious sites to make small offerings [982] and to pray. The races are held in the estuary of the river. In their excitement, children with infants on their back often wade out in the water to cheer their favorite boat.

796 The Festival of the Fifth Month (Gogatsumatsuri) is held on the 15th day of the 5th lunar month (June 19, 1951). Like the festival of the [793] spring equinox, it is a day of thanksgiving. Thanks are given for rice instead of for barley. In Hatsuda, the ceremony is conducted by the village head man and former members of the priestess system.[2]

[714] [805] 2 According to a Hatsuda informant, women should not sew on this day. It is a rest day. If work is done, including gathering plants for fertilizer, the dreaded poisonous snake, the habu, will come. These customs were not encountered in the other villages.

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who upset the tea cups and the sake flasks. 000

A public parade and celebration was held in Itoman in 1951, and a short digression to describe it may be worth while. The main attraction was a parade, which halted frequently so that participating groups could perform dances, acts, or skits. In these there were several themes: (1) dances by female groups of all ages from beginning school girls to old women in their seventies. Many women wore artificial turtles on their hats, the younger children having paper outlines of turtles. The young girls were led by an older man who kept time either by playing the samisen or by clapping his hands. The very young girls beat small tin cans with sticks. The dances of the older girls and women were of two kinds: one symbolized the crane and the turtle (tsurukame). The turtle is a symbol of longevity. The second is the pine-bamboo-plum tree triad (shochikubai) symbolizing long life and beauty. (2) Female impersonators imitated both the traditional Japanese woman with her costume and hair arrangement, and the modern woman with a chignon wearing a bright kimono, sun glasses, and smoking a cigarette. Their antics depended for their humor on the gracelessness of the men: they included mock flirtations and rejections, kicking of the heels, slapping with a fan, and other clowning. (3) Various balancing acts with long poles done by boys and young men. (4) Skits of individuals dressed as savages from the south seas. (5) Humorous acts showing the people of the northern district who were portrayed as jolly country bumpkins. Their caps, with tassels, looked like a cocoanut shell. The long false hair and beards were made of palm fibre. They carried ludicrous looking saws and axes while dragging a log.

One feature of the Itoman celebration was the well-known rope pulling contest (tsunahiki). The giant rope, made of rice straw, is at least 100 yards long, and about two feet in diameter. Each end has a loop. These loops, joined by a heavy piece of wood, are above the center line. The men of the town divide into two groups. The tug of war began about 5 in the afternoon and was soon over, but one has been known to last until one or two o'clock in the morning. It is found in all villages, but there is no set date for it. The tug of war is an old diversion in Okinawa.[5]

In former years, Minatogawa people participated in the Itoman festival. In 1951, they held their own evening celebration. This is a time of great beauty, with the light of the full moon illuminating the Pacific, the coral coast, and the mountains. The evening entertainment consists of some acts, similar to vaudeville, and a longer play. Crowds came from the surrounding villages, bringing their own mats and their own sake. Most of the officials of the township attended.

5 Goldschmidt, Neu-Japan, has reproduced an interesting painting showing a tug of war in Naha around the end of the 18th century. It shows an audience of court officials, the Chinese ambassador, as well as the various participants. Facing p. 179.

536 reminds his mother that he is a school teacher, that if he does not permit his father to enter the house, he can no longer teach school. The mother yields; the son and his wife bring their child to the new found grandfather, and the play closes with the overjoyed grandfather fondling and holding the child in his arms.

In the play, the conflict is resolved by a balancing of obligation with pride. A real father would have been so ashamed that he would [829] never have returned, but then there would have been no play. Only a poor, lonely shameless and crafty fellow would have come back. But once he was back, the son had no alternative but to accept and honor him. The woman's power in the house and her devotion to her son are demonstrated, but she too must yield to the obligation of her son's filial piety, though she does this only after a determined and dignified resistance.

545 Plays on the rural circuit start about 9 and end about 11 in the evening. The entertainment generally consists of an opening traditional dance by a woman, followed by a comedy skit, and a longer play, such as the one just described. Comedy skits usually depend on clumsiness or 536 obtuseness as the sources of their humor. One skit, for example, involved a thief entering a house at night. Clumsy and unsure of his way, he stumbled over everything, made loud noises, and was constantly in fright to see if some fresh stumble had awakened the house. Finally he manages to hide under a table, near which the members of the family are seated discussing a problem. His discovery, due to further awkward motions and noises, the chase, and his final apprehension close the skit.

545 Rural audiences are critical. Some actors cause laughter because their Okinawan pronunciation is considered poor, and the laughter often carries over to the serious parts. Delays between the acts are met with impatience, and there is some prompting from the audience. The admission is Y20 for adults and Y10 for children. The audience sits on the ground. These plays do not attract a large crowd unless the offering is a well liked play.

● 526 Sports and athletic meets are favorite recreations both for participants and observers. The sports mentioned by travellers 50 or 60 years ago, such as horse racing, boat racing, tugs of war, archery, and boxing have given way to a more organized athletic activity, inspired by the Japanese example. Only the boat racing and the rope tug of war have survived in these villages. Minatogawa's boat race each year attracts villagers from miles around. All villages, at various times of the year, have a rope tug of war. The annual athletic meets, which will be discussed under education, were introduced into Okinawa about 50 or 60 years ago.

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871 and the more advanced the school, the truer this is. Friendships are made early with children of nearby villages. Marriage may be 512 the result of early school acquaintance, encouraged by the acceptance of free choice in marriage. A young adult has a scattering of friendships in the villages of his township. These class friendships are strong in school, in the teens, and early twenties. By the late twenties, the circle of friendships has broadened.

182 One of the most significant links between the family, village, and school is the annual athletic meet (undōkai). It is held in the 526 fall. Preparations for this event are long and involve almost everybody.[5]

526 About a month before it is held, the meet is the topic of innumerable conversations. School children practice singing and athletic dancing drills at home. School teachers, who do most of the [875] organizational work, practice with painful cacophony on their trumpets and [534] clarinets. On the streets and lanes of Hinatogawa, young men from 17 to 23 practice broad jumping late into the night. Shortly before the meet, all normal school activities stop. The teachers paint signs, mimeograph programs, and plan the order of the various events. The school officials have interminable committee meetings.

There is much bustle, laundering, hair washing, and cooking in a village the day before the meet. Special lunches including rice dyed [262] red, bean curd, slices of fish paste, beef or pork are prepared. This field day is the closest approach to a picnic the Okinawans experience.

In good weather, the meet has a large attendance. A reserved area, with school desks and chairs is set aside for special guests. A person [576] entering the reserved section to take his seat bows to the mayor and the group, steps forward a few paces, bows again, and takes his seat.

The mayor of the township presides over the meeting relieved by the vice-mayor or other school or village or township officials. On one day of the autumn meet, the mayor remained seated throughout the morning and afternoon in a drizzling rain. It was his duty, assisted by the principal and the teachers of the school, to give out the prises.

Relay races, girls' dances, races and dashes for various age groups are endless. At present, the meeting is not confined to school children, but the younger men and women are included as well. The Young Men's Association is very active. Special events are included. In the Women's Association event, there was a mother and child race. In one case, a mother who entered the race with a child on her back and her young son as

[19] 5 These remarks are based on observations in Hinatogawa, Oushichan, and Hanashiro villages, and on attendance at the Oushichan meet in November 1951. From discussions, I am certain they are very similar in Matsuda, in fact all over the island.

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a running mate was vigorously applauded. The infant on her back was sleeping!

Four teams, the village officials, the teachers, high school students, and members of the Young Men's Association competed in a relay race. Later the teachers, and the mayor, participated in a rope and loop race. A rope about 20 feet long was tied to a stake driven in the ground. On the other end of the rope was a large loop. The trick is to run from a starting point, put the loop over the head, let it drop down and then step out. In the meantime, the opposing team has been trying to prevent the player from getting the loop by jerking the rope away, or throwing it at a distance. Other comedy events based on groping blindfolded to selected goals or objects were part of the program.

The races produce the greatest excitement, especially in the inter-village competition. A team from each village competes in a relay and runners representing their village participate in various dashes. In these competitive events, the old women become very excited. [628]

On this occasion the township gives a present to all people present who are 70 years old or over. The gift is now a plain towel; formerly the towel was embroidered with characters expressing wishes for a long life, but this practice has been abandoned for reasons of economy. [431]

The prizes, presented by the mayor to the contestants, are modest and generously given. The young men get four cigarettes, the women a paper of tooth powder, and the children, small school notebooks. The prize winners line up; each one steps up, makes a bow, receives his prize, lifts it up slightly, a typical Okinawan gesture of thanks noted by Basil Hall in 1816, bows again and retires. [516]

Though it centers around the school, the athletic meet is one of the strong forces bringing both families and village communities together. It would be hard to exaggerate the interest in the meet or the work that goes into its preparation. The fact that the mayor of the township, his staff, the village headmen, the principals of high schools, every parent and all the children who could possibly come, were present is enough to show its importance and vitality. 526 182

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would be nothing more uproarious than a group of singing celebrants seeking further entertainment from house to house. The occasional quarrels after drinking, which are mentioned elsewhere, seemed much more frequent where only a small group of men indulged after work, especially younger ones. No major holidays ended in dissonance.

The main events for family celebrations are lunar New Year, *seimei*, a period in spring during which descent group ancestors are revered and *Bon*, a commemoration of the dead in the fall. At these times families are reunited with relatives from other villages or the city. These events are observed in the home or in front of the ancestral tombs. During *Bon* young men and women go from house to house, performing traditional dances for this holiday in front of the assembled families.

Celebration of special birthday cycles and agricultural events, such as the day when ditches in the paddies were cleaned in former times, are observed by villagers as a group. An important religious event for the community is Boat Race Day in lunar June. On lunar August 15, the celebration of the full August moon, some villagers present stage performances and dances at a public celebration.

In general, it may be said that families gather as a unit on those days on which ancestors and deceased family members are commemorated. The village jointly celebrates events which are either based on local religion or on agricultural events. The only national holiday which is now in existence was established by the post-war Ryukyuan government. It is observed by school and government offices but not by the people.

Sport events form another category of holidays. The most important one falls in October when both in Japan and all over the Ryukyus athletes compete against each other. Athletic meets take place for several weeks; for the village the biggest event is the competition of all athletes in the township on *undokai* day. Everyone leaves work and takes picnic food to the track at the junior high school where each village competes against the others. This lasts all day.

Wrestling matches are part of entertainment during outdoor celebrations in the early summer. They are mainly an affair for young men. Occasionally an older man who feels strong enough challenges a younger one. The villagers sit around a large circle near the beach, watching the fights while they eat holiday food and drink sake. On Boat Race Day Taira and the neighboring village of Kawata race fishing canoes against each other. Spectators at this event are enthusiastic supporters of their favorites. After the races this holiday ends like any other, in celebrations with dance and drinking.

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Young girl carrying baby sister.

Boys wrestling.

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Playing house.

Mother about to nurse her daughter says, "Now say please."

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nails. One or two girls stand fearfully, almost in tears, while others subject themselves to inspection with aplomb. The boys by now are mocking the teacher by inspecting each other and commenting on the failure to meet the test. A few little girls disgustedly say, "These boys, wish we did not have to have them!" 863 872 876

After a brief lecture on cleanliness and orderliness, the teacher asks all to count the number of children present. Immediately there is bedlam as all start to count aloud. She quickly takes a count herself and waits for the first child to answer. As she listens to the shouts, she points out the child who has the right answer and says, "That is right, now let us count together. You, Sachiko, at the head of the line, one, next, Nariko, two. . . ."

Following this counting, the teacher may present a simple lesson in manners. She tells each child down the line to answer with a crisp "hai," then to state his name in full. The oldest girls respond obediently and help their 3- and 4-year-old siblings. As she approaches the line of boys, she frowns and nods. Each boy shouts his answer and name in spite of her protests to the effect that she is not hard of hearing. From somewhere near the end of the line comes a loud voice, "Hai, Taira, Saburo-san!" She quickly moves over to the possessor of the voice and taps the boy on his cleanly shaven head. The noise of the tap is sharp and clear. It induces a hearty round of laughs from all the children. The censured boy stands rubbing his head and smiling at the teacher as she tells him that he knows well one does not use the honorific suffix with one's own name. 872 867 876

The teacher does not attempt to present further lessons. Instead, she asks what kind of games the children would like to play. Shouts of "Race, race!" drown out her instruction to organize into teams. From the back of one 6-year-old girl she unstraps a screaming infant. With one arm cradling the infant, she drums to spur on the runners. From the direction of the village store, a grandmother comes slowly shuffling to join the group. She points out the 2-year-old on the back of his 5-year-old sibling who is starting off on his share of the run. The mother of the screaming infant comes running down the path to relieve the teacher of her burden. She sits nearby on a fence stone to nurse the baby and spur the runners on. Other adult passersby stop briefly to watch the runners, encourage them with shouts to run a little faster, clap their hands to congratulate a winner, and console a loser with advice to try harder the next time. 872 526

After the races the children sit and sing songs with the teacher. In their sitting positions they "act out" the songs with motions of their arms. The teacher releases her hold on the drumsticks as a 4-year-old

872 attempts to hold his hand over hers and he continues to beat out the
526 rhythm of the songs. While finishing the last song, she traces lines for the snail game on the sandy ground. A 5-year-old girl, singing the final words of the song, impatiently tugs at her hand. Taking the stick from her hand, the girl erases the teacher's lines and painstakingly tries to make a perfectly round spiral. She stands back to look at the finished "snail," hands the stick back to the teacher, and returns to her place.

The snail game involves teams of two groups of children. One member of a group takes his position in the inner end of the spiral, while the other stands at the outer end. At a signal from the teacher, both run toward each other as fast as possible to cover as much of the
[524] length of the line as possible. When they meet, they play a game similar to the American "rock, paper, and scissors." The loser gives up his turn to another member of his group who has to start at the beginning of the opposite end while the winner runs from the point at which the "toss" took place. At the point of meeting, another toss takes place, and the first contestant to reach the opposite end of the spiral wins a point for his team.

Another favorite game of the kindergarten children is "choosing sides." Two mixed groups stand opposite each other and at the signal one group, hand in hand, moves forward, gaily kicking their feet toward the other members of their group. "We will take, Yoshiko," they sing as they swoop in a semicircle to encircle the chosen one, who attempts to run away while her group tries to run interference. Then the next group has a turn. There is no real "winning" in this game, but the children enjoy the united chasing and united defense.

872 After playing organized games from about 9:30 until 11:15, the
262 children are temporarily disbanded while the teacher goes to prepare the powdered milk, which the children look forward to eagerly. Often the promise of milk serves as a powerful incentive to attend kindergarten for even the most incorrigible renegade. The children all scatter to run home for their small tea cups in which the coveted drink is served. As the teacher approaches the banyan tree from her home, bucket of milk and dipper in hand, she smiles to see the two lines
872 already formed. "Today, we will serve the girls first because the boys
876 were first yesterday," she announces, and immediately there is a shout
858 of disapproval from the boys and a few menacing scowls and upraised arms with clenched fists directed toward the girls. The little girls smile smugly back at the boys, and a few return the hostile threats. The most aggressive boys and girls soon become involved in a tussle, and the teacher serves notice that milk will be withdrawn for the day if order is not restored. The observer feels that in her reprimand to the

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attention as the teacher raps loudly at it with her pointer. She taps at the first figure and reproduces it on the black board, verbalizing it at the same time. She asks the children to imitate her, using their index fingers to follow the order of strokes. With their arms raised, the children reproduce the figure in the air. Five figures of the syllabary are reproduced in this way, and after reading it off several times, time is called. Just before the children are excused, they are told to learn the five figures. This is their first homework assignment.

It is 10:35, and from the direction of the principal's office, the recess bell can be heard. The teacher explains that after 20 minutes of play, the class will again convene for 1 hour and 20 minutes. The boys are allowed outdoors first and the girls follow. There is a flurry of excitement as older siblings appear to question the first graders on the activities of the morning. The children are reminded that this is also the time to go to the toilets.

The older boys and girls are already organized, and games of sham battle, volley ball, hopscotch, and marbles are in progress. The first graders wander in and out of other classrooms, then around the playground, where the various games are being played, until the bell signals them to return to their rooms. They return with a newly gained sense of confidence. The boys, who had been surreptitiously turning their heels in the well-worn marble holes on the dirt floor all morning, move the last row of desks and chairs just a few inches to clear the field for the game. The last few returning girls are given a rude shove to hurry along to their seats, for the boys are eager to start the game. With a great deal of shouting, magnified from the first-grade class next door, the boys begin their game of marbles.

While the teacher checks her records and consults numerous slips of paper on her table, the girls call to each other to check on books, contents of their lunch boxes, and plans for the afternoon. Finally the teacher raps for attention. The boys continue their game of marbles unconcernedly, and the girls scurry back to their seats. There is a wave of giggles as the raps reflect exasperation. "Where are the boys?" questions the annoyed teacher. There is no answer, but the few remaining boys and girls who have heeded their parents' and older siblings' advice to behave all turn their heads toward the back of the room. The teacher carefully picks her way through the closely lined and crowded room. The marble players are so engrossed in their games that they do not see her until she taps one head, then two, saying, "I have called you. Don't you know that recess is over?" Sheepishly a few walk off to their seats. A few smile broadly and run off to evade the pointers. Suddenly a high voice calls out, "The principal! The principal!"

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TRAINING IN SKILLS

868 There are no complex systems of training in skills. Adults rely heavily on observation and imitation on the part of children; they seldom "teach" them to do things systematically. Parents were surprised and amused when questions such as "How do you teach children to transplant rice, harvest rice, or otherwise help in the fields?" were put to them. "We don't teach them; why they just learn by themselves," was the usual answer.

Children learn by observing and experimenting. Whatever adults are doing, children are present to watch their activities and overhear their conversations. Although parents do not seem to make any special [852] efforts to have a child attend a function so that he might learn adult ways, they take their children to the fields, parties, public meetings, and rituals long before they consider them ready to absorb any learning.

868 In the fields, children play among rows of vegetables. When a par-
857 ent, grandparent, or older sibling stops for a rest to have a cup of tea,
243 the little ones pick up a hoe and attempt to imitate their elders. While
[264] rice is being transplanted, throngs of children sit on the dikes in the paddies, dangling their legs in the mud. They intently watch adults transplanting and weeding the paddies. Gradually they edge down into the mud to stamp with their bare feet in the ooze as they have seen adults do, until a warning shout arrests their educational water play. During the harvest season, groups of children carry mats out to the paddies and watch infants who need to be near their mothers for their feedings. While the infants sleep, the older children walk along the dikes, watching the work that is going on and clamoring to be of some help. Even a little child of kindergarten age stands by gloomily until an adult laughingly hands him a small bundle of rice sheaves to carry over to the threshing machine. By the time the child is 8, he has learned enough by watching to attempt cutting and tying small bundles of rice sheaves.

868 After the harvest, rice straw can be found in great quantities around
283 the village. Some of the best straw is preserved to be made into rope.
[526] If there are rainy days, men will sit and twist the rice straw into rope, while 8- and 9-year-olds sit and watch. In a few days rope games and swings are in evidence everywhere. Little 4- and 5-year-olds stand by watching the older children, and soon they pick up stray bits of straw and twist them to no avail. A younger sibling whines as her move-

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

have little time and patience to concern themselves seriously with their children's schoolwork; and since their daily work is hardly an inspiration to the child to improve his scholastic activities, there is some question in how much parental influence is relevant here. Moreover, mothers are always under pressure from the teachers to urge their children to work hard and would respond to such an obviously weighted question in this fashion to a person to whom they accorded the same polite title in address, which they use toward their children's teacher, *sensei* (i.e., the interviewer). It is also a fact that teachers have had difficulty getting parents to cooperate in training their children to establish regular home-study habits. Fathers, on the whole, seem even less consistent than mothers in supervising schoolwork. The fact that most boys would like to be first but make concentrated efforts to improve their work only if they perform poorly suggests that parental discipline usually does not function effectively until the child has become severely delinquent in his studies.

If the desire to cheat in school is a measure of competitive pressures, it is interesting to note that there are few such attempts made during the examinations which are held several times a year. Nothing is done to separate the students whose tables are close together. Although the teacher remains in the classroom, he hardly proctors. However, the teacher commented that if a student is suspected of unfair practices, others will report his activities to the teacher.

An impetus for the development of competitive spirit has been the introduction by the Japanese of athletic sports into the schools. The communities participate annually in athletic competitions sponsored by the schools and other agencies outside the community. One is impressed, however, that these events have taken on the Okinawan pattern of a pleasant gathering where the older people can enjoy being sociable while the young men and women engage in various sports.

A few students have regularly assigned tasks and offices. Each class selects a monitor. The method of selection varies, depending on the teacher. In one class, candidates were taken at large, and the student who received the largest number of votes took the office. The monitor is responsible for the class during the morning assembly and during athletics. He sees to it that students line up and remain orderly. In the classroom he has the same responsibility, but we observed nobody discharging his duties in an authoritarian way, although some older boys liked to show their strength in a playful manner of bullying.

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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the teasing good humoredly, as seen in the incident of a 10-year-old girl, S., who is teased by a 7-year-old boy, A., described in the following protocol.

S. is guarding the can in a can-kicking game. A. (who has been playing a rubber band game with another boy nearby) looks up, smiles, goes running over to the can and kicks it with his foot, yelling, "Safe!" S., whose back is turned to him, jumps, turns around and sees him. "You're not playing this game," she laughs and A. laughs and goes back to his own game.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SIBLINGS

As mentioned above, the caretaking responsibility and the tendency of younger siblings who are beyond the carrying stage to follow an older brother or sister keep siblings together a great deal during play. When an older brother has to mind a younger sister, he is usually not overly protective. He seldom defends his sister from teasing and sometimes is more aggressive to her than he would be to others if she interferes with his activities. There is, of course, a great deal of variation due to personality. A 5-year-old boy (one of the teasers described above) sometimes pushes his younger sister, and she runs home crying. An 11-year-old boy, on the other hand, when he takes care of his four younger sisters, or some of them, is usually quite protective and nurturant.

A record of the behavior of T. (7 years), his younger sister H. (4 years), and other boys illustrates a brother-sister interaction. T. and other boys have made a swing and T. is sitting on it while A. (5-year-old boy) and H. try to get turns:

A. tries to get him off the swing. H., who expected that her turn would come next, whines "nisan (older brother)" and while A. tries to get T. off, she keeps on whining, "This should be enough." T. replies, "This is A.'s turn"; while A. is trying to get on the swing, H. starts crying and goes into the house. Apparently an adult is in the house. T. follows, voices are heard, but not understood. T. returns after a moment and helps F. (another boy) push A. on the swing. H. seems to have stopped crying. We heard no adult scolding T. or talking to H. H. returns, no longer crying. She stands behind T. whose body swings back and forth while pushing A. H. pushes T.'s swinging body to help him. A., F., and H. sing in rhythm, "one, two, three," etc. After song is finished, H. says, "Brother, it is my turn next." T. ignores her, but A. gets off the swing and H. sits on it. H. swings by herself. T. orders A. to help him push the door next to the swing open. A. complies. T.'s mother passes, does not say anything. After the door has been opened (and more room gained), T. and A. push H.

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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gets a turn. Teams of two girls at a time play hopscotch, which they call "parent and child game."

An old Okinawan game of skill on which early Western visitors have frequently commented is still a favorite of Taira boys, 5 years and older. This is a kind of stick-ball game. A wedge-shaped piece of wood 3 to 4 inches long and pointed at both ends and a striking club are used. Children whittle both with a knife. This game is played by two or more players, and the purpose of the game is to get the wedge into a hole. The game requires a series of skillful manipulations of the wedge with the club. It is an exciting and competitive game. Each player is awarded a number of points for certain accomplished acts. Although boys are quite absorbed in this play, there are rarely any arguments and the winner hardly ever shows any pride. Winners seldom boast after a game, and the observers felt that the satisfaction is really gained from the performance, not from having outdone others. Girls sometimes join the boys in this game.

Boys and girls, separately or together, play other games of skill, such as marbles. A challenge by another starts a game, sometimes of two, sometimes of four or six players. There is usually a kibitzer around who becomes involved. Two games in the same play area are not uncommon while spectators wait for their turns later.

Equally common, but frowned on by the school because of its gambling character, is a rubber band game. The store uses rubber bands to tie packages. Children carry a number on their arms. Each player chips in a number of bands, two or more, depending on agreement. The person who starts the game is decided on by tossing. The rubber bands are put on a cement or wooden surface, a step or block with a ledge from which the rubber can drop down. They are placed at some distance from the ledge. Then they are moved toward it, either by hitting the ground with the palm of the hand, slightly cupped so that air escapes, or by blowing. The rubber bands drop over the ledge, and the person whose rubber band first overlaps with another wins the stake. This game continues until one player has won all the rubber bands. Parents object to the game only if the children buy rubber bands instead of collecting them.

Boys like to practice skill in sports. Wrestling, a national sport in Japan and the Ryukyus during spring and early summer, is taken up by boys who copy young men and older students, and for several weeks wrestling matches get spontaneously under way. Prior to the annual island-wide athletic meets in September, boys practice high jump, broad jump, and relay running. There is much practice for the mere

857 fun of it, but few signs of involvement with attaining outstanding per-
526 formance. Losers are not teased or ridiculed, although a good per-
[157] former is occasionally given an encouraging remark by others who practice.

Group games are usually played after the schoolchildren have returned to the village. One of the popular games is a version of prisoner's base similar to that played in the United States. This game is played with much yelling, laughing, and noisy challenging. Equally popular is a version of "kick the can." This game is exciting and fast moving. It is a game which can lead to arguments, since one must trust the honesty of the person who is "it" and claims to have seen another player. Brief arguments arise and are quickly settled. Part of the fun seems to be teasing and challenging the tagger.

535 These are games that children may play on any day in the year.
857 During holidays they are sometimes asked to entertain adults with
[527] dances. Little girls learn the traditional Okinawan dances from kinder-
[871] garten days on, either by watching or by coaching of an older person, a friend, one's older sister, or mother. Neither kindergarten nor school programs include the teaching of such rich Okinawan heritage as classical dances. Boys do not begin to imitate the burlesque dances of their male elders until adolescence. But they are sometimes invited, together with girls, to present group dances or little plays for the adults. Adults seem to enjoy most the performances of Okinawan dances by little girls who may have learned the rhythm and movements but not the restraint of serious adult presentations. They are delighted if a 6-year-old, dressed in bright-colored costume, innocently wiggles her hips in a rather suggestive way.

857 Children who perform for adults show no stage fright. At school,
[156] where little sketches are presented on the stage, there is a complete ease in improvising. Nobody is embarrassed if he forgets a line, a song, or a cue, and the recitation contests which we have already mentioned are carried out with much zest.

[512] Schoolchildren are supposed to remain at home after 8 o'clock in the evening to do their studies. This rule is encouraged by the school but rarely enforced by parents. Many children, boys and girls, appear outside after dark, and on moonlight nights they often resume their playing. Off and on, a couple of elementary schoolboys are attracted to the store where the village truck arrives with goods from the city after nightfall. There they stand in the dim yellow light of the kerosene lamp, watching, helping, or just listening to some of the men who
[515] come to have their sake bottles filled. If a bath has been prepared for
[512] their families, their turn will come sometime after the older males in

Others include levies upon
651 organizations and families to support the athletic meets, or 'undōkwai',
[526] which are such a popular part of life in Okinawa.

575 Before the war the women's group ('fujinkai') and the young people's
178 group ('seinendan') levied a certain amount of soybeans against each member,
and when they were delivered the sale brought in money to finance their ac-
[524] tivities. These organizations also made up special meals for local athletic
526 favorites while they were in training, and provided a feast for them at the
651 end of the contests. Today the 'undōkwai' is on more of a monetary basis,
632 and there is a levy called the 'undōkwai no keihi'. In October of 1953, the
cost of the grand athletic meeting held in Naha was divided among the 'son'
according to the number of champions sent to the contest. Kochinda-son was
top grade in Shimajiri, and Tomoyose was a middle-grade village within
Kochinda-son. This grade was judged by the amount of arable land, its yield,
and the population. Within the village, households in turn are assessed by
three grades, according to their income tax records. These three grades
were "minimum," under ¥20; "middle", ¥20-50; and "maximum", ¥50-54.

621 Local Philanthropy From time to time the leading household heads are called
741 upon to donate money for improvement of village facili-
ties. Names of contributors and amounts given are written upon a wooden
plaque and hung in the village meeting house. The building of this meeting
house itself involved the gathering of such a fund, to which Nanahan people
gave a total of ¥1,450. Later a request for funds to buy a funeral stretcher
brought ¥350 from the household heads, and a road repair campaign netted
¥1,550 from Nanahan.

Somewhat the reverse of the above occurred after the Russo-Japanese war when a particularly handsome soldier from the neighboring village came back from the front. All the leading 'geisha' in Naha had long had the habit of asking him to come to their establishments without charge. His return brought such joy to their hearts that they got together a sum of money and bought him a large plot of land near Nanahan.

52 Prizes at Contests From the time a youngster enters school and participates in his first contest to the time when he shows an animal at his last village or 'son' festival before retiring, all winners look forward to some sort of prize to mark the occasion. In school the prizes are generally beautifully handwritten scrolls, but as one gets older the prizes assume the form of wooden trays and articles of practical use in the home.

858 Sale of Children When the SIRI team first arrived on Okinawa and mentioned
432 that we were interested in finding if the Okinawans still
[183] practiced the sale of children, sophisticated respondents feigned indignation. Later on, as we were able to gain rapport in the countryside, a number of such instances were forthcoming.

In Tomoyose a man got into debt over an effort to make a fortune in sugar along about 1910. He was so heavily in debt to village people that he was socially unable to live in the community, and moved to Itoman. There he sold his son to a fisherman. The son is now a grown man with an Okinawan wife and a mistress from Amami. His business is still fishing, although he also owns a truck.

households. Noodles are another item of regular purchase. Starch and bean paste are typical items which formerly were always made in the home but now may be purchased instead. 178 262

In sum Okinawan diet has improved in quantity and variety. Food tastes are more catholic today; certain foreign foods are greatly appreciated. There is a greater reliance on manufactured and processed foods, and greater cash expenditures are made for food.

Entertainment and Leisure There has been a marked decline in village celebrations and festivals in which all residents participate. Formerly O Bon, New Year's, and harvesting time were occasions for village-wide celebrations; today these are gone from most communities; celebrations are restricted to the family and friends. Most of the village celebrations were basically religious in nature and with the decline of the old religion these celebrations have been dropped. 527 796 178 621

Parties to mark an individual's change of status were formerly held on the 13th, 25th, 37th, 48th, 61st, 73rd, 85th, 88th and 97th birthdays, but today only those for the old people are observed. Frequently a party is held to mark an individual's success in the competitive examination to enter high school, but aside from that, rites of passage for the young and middle-aged are no longer observed. 527 178

The Japanese introduced one form of entertainment which has achieved immense popularity; this is a sporting event sponsored by the school. These are usually held on Sunday during the fall of the year, and usually the whole school participates. There is intra-school competition and later inter-school; intense interest is generated and often this becomes an important topic for conversation among the young men. 526 • 177

Local units of the national organizations such as the youths' association and the women's association frequently hold parties for their members. In fact these organizations are mainly of a social nature. 595

As noted above, prior to the war there were five motion picture theaters on Okinawa; today there are fifty-seven. American and European films constitute from one quarter to one third of the total shown. Though most of these theaters are located in the cities and towns, the young people of the nearby farming villages make frequent use of them. The popularity of the American "Western" among the young people has caused some to attribute juvenile delinquency to this, although the relatively more bloody Japanese sword-fighting pictures ('chambara') are considered harmless. 546 177

The popularity of Okinawan dancing and music seems undiminished. Radio broadcasts of Okinawan music are much enjoyed; and virtually every party provides the opportunity for music and dancing in which most of the guests participate. A few of the better-educated young people profess an appreciation of Western classical music and jazz, but most of them prefer Japanese and American love ballads though they still remain very fond of the Okinawan music. 533 535 177